

CLAIMS

1. A method of creating animation in a computer system, the method comprising:

creating an object in a drawing window wherein the object has one or more components and the object in the drawing window is static; and

displaying simultaneously in an animation window the object in an animated manner, such that as a component of the object is being drawn in the drawing window the object is animated and displayed to the user in an animation window in the form of an animated object, whereby the animated object is capable of being played back immediately as the object is created in the drawing window.

2. A method as recited in claim 1 further comprising displaying the object in an animated manner in a first scenario.

3. A method as recited in claim 2 wherein the first scenario is a collaborative community environment and the object is a character developed by a user.

4. A method as recited in claim 1 further comprising:

placing a representation of the component of the object in a drawing buffer as the component is being drawn;

transmitting the representation of the component in the drawing buffer to an animation buffer; and

displaying the component in an animated manner in the animation window.

5. A method as recited in claim 1 further comprising:

placing a representation of the component of the object in a shared buffer; and

displaying directly from the shared buffer the component of the object in the animation window.

6. A method as recited in claim 1 further comprising creating a drawing window and an animation window.

5 7 A method as recited in claim 1 further comprising selecting a component or a pre-existing object to be placed in the drawing window.

8. A method as recited in claim 1 further comprising displaying the component in the animation window upon the release of a pointer device.

9. A method as recited in claim 1 further comprising:
10 determining data corresponding to position, orientation, and scale of the component at a given time and storing said data in a first buffer;

searching in the first buffer for said data; and

placing the component based on said data in the animation window.

10. A method as recited in claim 1 wherein creating the object and
15 displaying simultaneously in an animation window the object in an animated manner both occur in a single process.

11. A method as recited in claim 1 further comprising using a plurality of drawing implements and modeling techniques to create the object.

12. A method of displaying animation in a computer system having a
20 computer monitor as components in the animation are being created, the method comprising:

drawing a component in a drawing window wherein the drawing window occupies a first area of the computer monitor; and

showing the component as part of an animated object in an animation window wherein the animation window occupies a second area of the computer monitor, such that the component is shown with the animated object while the component is drawn, and wherein the first and second areas of the computer monitor are displayed simultaneously.

5

13. A method as recited in claim 12 further comprising showing the component as part of an animated object in a pre-existing context.

14. A method as recited in claim 13 wherein the pre-existing context is a story developed by a collaborative effort of members in a community.

10